

BBC Learning English
Words in the news
29th August 2008
*Obama accepts nomination for
US presidency*



In the US, Barack Obama has accepted the Democratic nomination for the presidency, making him the first black candidate to run for office. He was speaking in a packed stadium in the centre of Denver, from where our correspondent Kevin Connolly reports:

OBAMA: I accept your nomination for presidency of the United States.

The night on which a major American party **acclaimed** a black presidential candidate for the first time **called for something unique by way of theatre** and Barack Obama **obliged**. In the rock star setting of a cavernous football stadium, on a stage decorated with columns that looked suspiciously like those of the White House itself, he delivered a speech that touched on everything - from motherhood to mortgage debt.

It was strong on patriotism and the readiness to use force **as a last resort**, but longer on talk of rebuilding areas of American life, which he said, had been **fractured** in the era of George W Bush:

OBAMA: In Washington they call this the Ownership Society. But what it really means is that you are on your own. Out of work? **Tough luck**, you are on your own. Born into poverty? **Pull yourself up by your own boot straps**. Even if you don't have boots you are on your own.

Topped off with red, white and blue fireworks and confetti fired from stage side cannons, it produced **rapturous applause** inside the stadium. Its real political test though is how it will play in **the uncommitted America that lies beyond**.

Kevin Connolly, BBC News, Denver

Vocabulary and definitions

acclaimed	publicly recognized and praised
called for something unique by way of theatre	encouraged a performance that would be like nothing else in the past
obliged	didn't fail to meet expectations
as a last resort	only when all other measures don't work
fractured	here, seriously damaged (literally, if you fracture a bone, you break it)
Tough luck	this expression is used colloquially to say, 'your situation is unfortunate but it can't be helped and is none of my concern'
Pull yourself up by your own boot straps	improve your situation by your own efforts (colloquial)
Topped off with	finished spectacularly with
rapturous applause	when people clap their hands with great enthusiasm because they are impressed and delighted
the uncommitted America that lies beyond	Americans outside of the stadium who may have not yet decided who to vote for in the election

More on this story: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7586375.stm>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/08/080829_obama.shtml